

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MARYLAND

MANUEL A. RODRIGUEZ, *et al.*, \*

Plaintiffs, \*

V. \* Civil Action No. 19-cv-02077-CCB

HOWARD COUNTY, MARYLAND, \*

Defendant. \*

\* \* \* \* \*

**ORDER GRANTING JOINT MOTION FOR  
CERTIFICATION AS A COLLECTIVE ACTION  
AND JUDICIAL APPROVAL OF NOTICE TO  
PROPOSED CLASS AND SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT**

Upon consideration of the Joint Motion for Certification as a Collective Action and Judicial Approval of Notice to Proposed Class and proposed Settlement Agreement filed by Plaintiffs, Manuel Rodriguez, Penelope Camp, and Christopher Stavrou (hereinafter, "Plaintiffs"), and Defendant Howard County, Maryland (hereinafter, "Defendant") (collectively hereinafter, "Parties"), the Court hereby GRANTS the Motion, certifies this matter as a collective action, and approves the Notice to Proposed Class and proposed Settlement Agreement, based on the following findings:

1. The Parties' stipulation to the class description and notice to the proposed class, attached hereto as Exhibits A and B, respectively, are accepted by the Court as establishing a similarly situated class and appropriate notice to the class.

2. The Parties have provided the Court with sufficient information to conclude that the Settlement Agreement affords complete relief for the Plaintiffs' Fair Labor

Standards Act ("FLSA") claims for unpaid wages and overtime. Complete relief renders a case moot, as recently recognized in *Genesis Healthcare Corp. v. Symcyk*, 569 U.S. 66 (2013); *Simmons v. United Mortgage and Loan Investment, LLC*, 634 F.3d 754 (4th Cir. 2011).

3. In addition, the Settlement Agreement represents a fair and reasonable resolution of a *bona fide* dispute under the FLSA according to the factors that have been cited in other actions before this Court. *See, e.g., Dupree v. Scotts Co., LLC*, 300 F. Supp.3d 404, 407-408 (D. Md. 2014); *Saman v. LBDP, Inc.*, 2013 2949047 at\* 3 (D. Md., June 13, 2013).

4. The Court finds that the proposed settlement was the result of arms' length negotiations between counsel for the Parties, who are experienced in the field of FLSA litigation, during the course of two mediation conferences before Chief United States Magistrate Judge Beth Gesner.

5. The attorneys' fees and costs to be paid under the proposed settlement agreement are separately stated and Plaintiffs' counsel has provided sufficient information to permit the Court to conclude that the fees and costs represent payments for amounts actually incurred at a reasonable hourly rate. The amount for fees and costs bear a reasonable relationship to the amount being paid to Plaintiffs under the Agreement.

WHEREFORE, this Court hereby Orders that the Joint Motion be and is hereby **GRANTED**, this matter shall proceed as a collective action pursuant to 29 U.S.C. §216(b), the notice to be sent to proposed members of the class and the proposed Settlement Agreement are hereby **APPROVED**, and the parties shall provide the Court with a status update regarding the progress of the calculations no later than June 30, 2020.

4/23/2020

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Beth P. Gesner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Beth" and last name "Gesner" clearly legible.

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**The Honorable Beth P. Gesner**  
**United States District Court**  
**Chief Magistrate Judge**